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JONATHAN COWAN

JOHN CHASE, 1953–2010

I first met John Leighton Chase 23 years ago, in 1987. I had been sent here by *The Architectural Review* magazine to survey the new architecture coming out of Los Angeles. No sooner had I arrived than I got a cheery phone

continued on page 8

RENZO'S RESNICK FULFILLS LACMA'S POTENTIAL



ALEX VERTIKOFF

TRANSFORMATION REDUX

The Resnick Pavilion, which opens to the public on October 2, is the second major structure that Renzo Piano has created for the LA County Museum of Art. It employs roof louvers and travertine cladding similar to his 2008 Broad Contemporary Art Museum (BCAM), but on a single level. Its horizontality plays off the verticality of BCAM, as do its scarlet extrusions—sensu-

ously rounded mechanical casings along the sidewalls. In contrast to BCAM, the Resnick offers a single space, unbroken except for two rows of slender columns, bathed in natural light from above and from the glass wall to the north.

That singular luminosity fulfills Piano's promise of "calm, serenity, and even a voluptuous quality linked

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AMAZING GLAZING

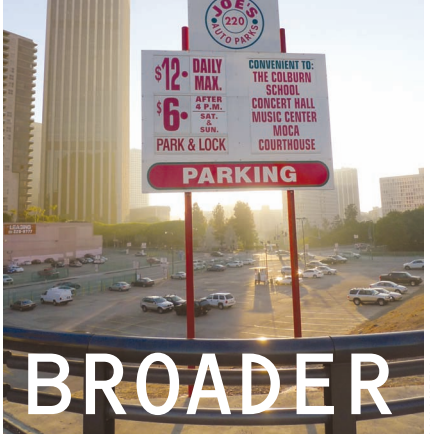
AN'S GLASS ISSUE PROFILES THREE CLEAR-AND-PRESENT STUNNERS. PLUS STATE-OF-THE-ART GLASS PRODUCTS. SEE PAGES 11–14

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DS+R TO DESIGN GRAND AVENUE ARTS COMPLEX



SAM LUBELL

BROADER

After months—make that years—of speculation, philanthropist and art collector Eli Broad has confirmed the selection of Diller

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NEUTRA'S STRATHMORE TO FACE UNWELCOME NEIGHBOR



COURTESY PPC LANDVENTURES

ment across the street from Richard Neutra's famed Strathmore Apartments in Westwood. Opponents have been trying to stop the project for over a year.

The scheme, called Grandmarc Westwood, would be located on the corner of Strathmore Drive and Levering Avenue, next to the UCLA campus. Developed by Dallas-based PPC Landventures and designed by LA-based Togawa Smith Martin, the rectilinear project will contain 31 multi-room residential units on six floors, arranged in a triangular plan.

Despite being rejected six times by the Westwood Design Review Board (DRB) on the grounds that its bulk, massing, and character were incompatible with the

continued on page 9

LAST STAND

At a rambunctious and disjointed meeting of the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission on

September 15, neighbors, architects, and others failed in a final effort to halt a large student housing develop-

BALLOT PROPOSAL THREATENS CALIFORNIA'S GREEN CRED

Scary Proposition

Most of the controversy over California Proposition 23, set for this November's ballot, has centered on its supporters: oil giants Valero Energy, Occidental Petroleum, and Tesoro, all based outside California. Yet it is the initiative's potential consequences for energy-efficient initiatives that have many in the architecture community worried.

At the heart of the

continued on page 4



HOUSE OF THE ISSUE SEE PAGE 10

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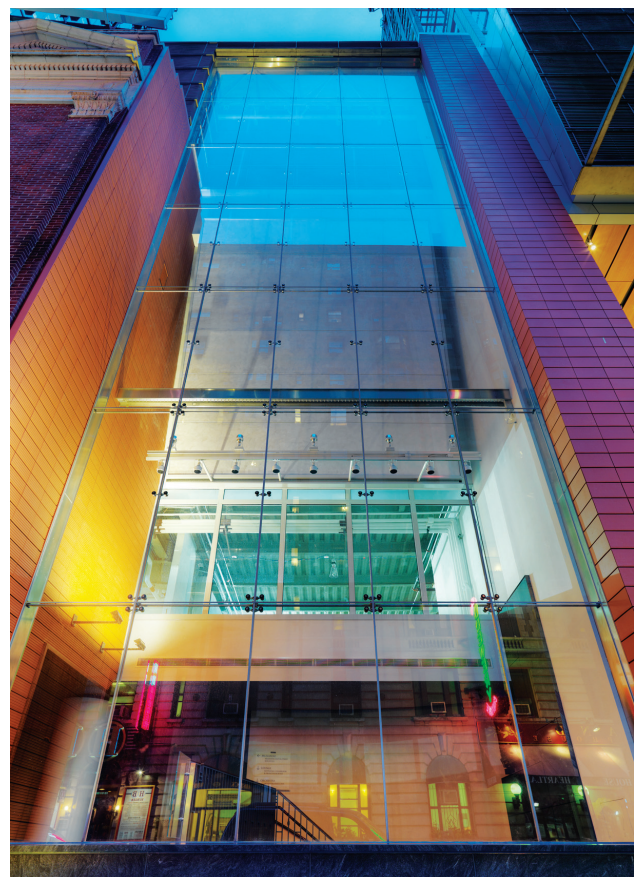
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EYES WIDE SHUT

Like any crime, the worst architectural malfeasance is usually committed when nobody is watching. And so it is particularly disturbing to see the public process subverted in such overt ways in recent days in Los Angeles.

Take for example LA billionaire Eli Broad, who is building his own museum in downtown LA. This, it should be said, is a great coup for the city. But despite getting a deal from the city on one of its most valuable pieces of real estate, Broad still hasn't shared designs for the new museum with the public. His only gesture in that direction was allowing *LA Times* critic Christopher Hawthorne a peek at the contending models, which the Broad Foundation doesn't plan to otherwise share until after ground is broken, at which point it will likely be too late to make changes. The foundation staff is meanwhile impossible to reach, and has basically never returned a phone call in my experience.

Another low blow: We've just reported on the approval of the imposing new development next to Neutra's Strathmore Apartments in Westwood, called the Grandmarc Westwood. Despite being rejected six times by the local design review board, the plan was passed by the City Planning Commission, a move that ignored the emphatic advice of many architects and planners. At the public meeting about the project, the voice of the people may as well have been bought by the developer: Every person against the project seemed to be from nearby Westwood Village, while those supporting it appeared to hail from the Valley, the OC, and the Inland Empire.

In both cases, it seems to me as though city officials were willing to look the other way and ignore the needs of the public in order to usher in projects they believed could be beneficial, either financially or culturally. Apart from any boon to the city, such decisions can't be made at the expense of public debate.

Los Angeles is stunningly uninterested in including the public in design decisions. When do we see major design competitions in Los Angeles? And when do public officials actually reach out to the public when proposing a big project? This culture needs to change so that policy-makers and stakeholders are held accountable. This also means that the public needs to be better informed about architecture and design. A NIMBY reaction any time a new project comes along is equally benighted.

It doesn't have to be this way: Try to put up a monstrosity in New York or San Francisco and community members mobilize instantly to tear out the offender's eyeballs—until a compromise is reached. Here it's a collective shrug, easy to ignore.

The greatest architecture reflects its community, but how can it be great if its creators turn a deaf ear to the public, and the public doesn't bat an eye in return? **SAM LUBELL**

SCARY PROPOSITION continued from front page debate is California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, or Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), a comprehensive program to reduce carbon emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. AB 32 calls for the implementation of 69 measures, among them green building mandates and incentives, sustainable community strategies, high-speed rail, and energy- and water-efficiency initiatives.

Supporters of Proposition 23 aim to suspend the implementation of AB 32 until the state's unemployment rate is at or below 5.5 percent for four consecutive quarters. Detractors point out that since that has only occurred three times in the past 30 years, it would essentially kill the landmark legislation. "The law would be put on ice," said attorney Donald Simon of Wendel, Rosen, Black & Dean.

Prop. 23 also threatens the CALGreen building code, a bill that aims to control greenhouse gas emissions by curbing sprawl; initiatives relating to greening state buildings and public schools; and high-speed rail, which could trigger significant infrastructure and transit-oriented development.

"Anything tied to the implementation of AB 32 and its climate goals is at risk," Simon said. He added that the green building code, however, might survive because it has other legal authority outside of AB 32, but it could still be tied up in litigation lasting as long as ten years. Existing building retrofits could be stymied, too, as they are often driven by incentives derived from government policies for climate change.

The issue gained added attention when Senate hopeful Carly Fiorina announced her support for the "imperfect" proposal on September 3. This led to a rebuke from incumbent Senator Barbara Boxer.

The AIA California Council voted overwhelmingly to oppose the initiative. "Prop. 23 risks stalling or removing any incentives for green technology and the next round of innovation and industry in our state," said William Worthen, vice president at green building consultancy Simon & Associates, and a board member of the AIACC. "If it passes, it unravels what makes California a leader," he added.

Simon said the effects of Prop. 23 could extend well beyond the state's borders. Since the 1970s, California's environmental regulation initiatives have set the agenda, with other states and the federal government following its lead.

"Basically, if California's climate laws are killed, there is zero percent chance we'll get a national climate law," he said.

JENNIFER CATERINO



NEXT CENTURY ASSOCIATES

SASAKI HOTEL TO EXPAND INTO MIXED-USE COMPLEX

Century Saved

In August, Next Century Associates, the owners of LA's Century Plaza Hotel, unveiled plans for the building and its environs that include preserving the structure and surrounding it with a five-acre, billion-dollar mixed-use development. The new scheme came as a result of severe public outcry against razing the 726-room hotel, designed by World Trade Center architect Minoru Yamasaki, and once considered all but doomed.

In the new plan, two 46-story mixed-use towers will flank the Century Plaza, serving as a luxury condominium, hotel, and meeting/banquet facility in much the same way that it has for its entire history. A key element of the project is the elimination of the central portion

of the hotel's ground floor to allow unobstructed pedestrian flow from the new forecourt on Avenue of the Stars to a lush public plaza behind. The hotel's original aluminum skin will remain intact.

"The new plan fulfills a key goal of the Century City Greening Plan: to enhance pedestrian access and experience," said Henry N. Cobb of Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, the project's lead architects. Gensler will be the project's executive architect, Marmol Radziner and Associates its preservation architect, and Rios Clementi Hale Studios its landscape architect.

Cobb said of the glassy new towers: "Although they are not identical twins, they are

shaped and positioned so that they are seen to be identical and symmetrical in relation to the hotel." Cobb added that the flanking, tree-lined driveways to the towers further emphasize the hotel's unique concave facade. The new towers will include up to 290 condos, 94,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, and nearly 100,000 square feet of office space. The final design of the towers is still in development.

The preservation community appears pleased. "Next Century and its design team have been very receptive," said Linda Dishman, executive director of the Los Angeles Conservancy. "They are proposing a project that sets the historic hotel as the centerpiece." **JAKE TOWNSEND**

COOTIES ALERT

It's official. Since taking over William Morris and merging it into William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, **Ari Emanuel**, Rahm's brother, has decided he won't move into the Gensler-designed William Morris Headquarters in Beverly Hills. Apparently he wouldn't deign to locate himself in anything associated with the firm he took over. That leaves the building, whose shell will be done any day now, without a tenant. So the question remains: Who, if anyone, will move in?

IN MEMORIAM MENSWEAR

When West Hollywood Urban Designer **John Chase** died tragically in August of a heart attack, his inspiring sense of style lived on. At his memorial in West Hollywood on August 24, friends and colleagues celebrated his much-admired sartorial quirkiness by wearing what he would have wanted them to wear. That meant fedora, panama, and red cowboy hats, Hawaiian shirts, floral suits, rainbow-pattern pants, and pink ties, for starters. Family and friends spent the night staring at the gargantuan LED tribute to Chase at 8410 West Sunset Avenue, across from the Andaz hotel on the Sunset Strip. We'll miss you John, always, but we'll always have the wardrobe and a party in your honor to remember.

VENICE, L.A. VERSUS VENICE, ITALY

One of the biggest storylines at this year's Venice Biennale was the invasion of the LA Architects, led by **Eric Owen Moss**, who was chosen to lead the Austrian Pavilion, despite not actually being Austrian. Moss corralled **Hernan Diaz Alonso**, **Craig Hodgetts**, **Ming Fung**, and others for an installation about Austrian architectural exports and imports that reputedly cost in excess of \$800,000. That's a lot of schlagobers for installations that usually operate within a \$400,000 budget.

THAT'S SOME PIG

At press time, the new L+M gallery in Venice, designed by WHY Architects, was just getting set to open on September 24. The project is a beautiful renovation of an old power station with a lofty new diamond-shaped brick addition. The gallery may be cool, but the art inside could be too hot for many to handle: animatronic sculptures of **George Bush** having sex with pigs, by artist **Paul McCarthy**. There's really not much more we want to say about this, except to say that these sculptures move very efficiently. They will haunt our nightmares. Did we say the gallery looks really nice?

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ATELIER KS

San Francisco neighborhoods are famous for their eclectic variety of styles, histories, and energies. Taking full advantage of this is Atelier KS, designers of Local: Mission Eatery. Inserting the restaurant into the first floor of a 19th-century Victorian building and using a palette of salvaged historical materials, the craft of local artisans, and high-tech new architectural products, they have created an astutely modern space. The salvaged materials make sense in a restaurant that focuses on locally sourced foods. The storefront and a communal dining table inside feature salvaged Douglas fir found on site. Suspended wood ceilings were constructed with material discovered during demolition. The restaurant's tiled wall was made from local artist John Fischer's screen prints pressed onto the wood of various neighborhood locations. Steel signage was created by local fabricator Matthew Granelli. For a touch of modern tech, the kitchen includes sleek zinc countertops and a cantilevered shelving system supported by custom steel straps. **SL**

BROADER continued from front page

Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R) to design his new museum, which will be located on Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles. The \$80 to \$100 million 2nd Street project will be located across the street from the Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Museum of Contemporary Art. It would house and display art from Broad's 2,000-piece collection, including works by Andy Warhol, Jeff Koons, and Damien Hirst. It will also contain offices for the Broad Foundation.

The Grand Avenue Authority, a joint-powers authority between the County of Los Angeles and the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles, approved the project on August 23, and Broad made his announcement simultaneously.

DS+R "brings a very special energy to

the city, and to the art world," said Richard Koshalek, director of the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C. and one of Broad's informal advisors, who hired the firm earlier this year himself to design a pop-up pavilion that would literally balloon out of the Hirshhorn's donut-hole center. Others counseling Broad on architecture have included journalist Joseph Giovannini, consultant Marcy Goodwin, and even Frank Gehry. DS+R has been busy in California recently, having been selected to design the new Berkeley Art Museum and the Pacific Film Archive, and having made the shortlist for the SFMOMA expansion, which was then awarded to Snøhetta. In fact, some believed that when the firm won the Berkeley commission early this summer, Broad might lose interest.

In recent years, DS+R has completed a number of significant cultural projects, including the Lincoln Center redevelopment with Alice Tully Hall in New York and the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. The Hirshhorn project is in development.

Speculation over the project has been ongoing since Broad first raised the possibility in 2008 of a museum near Santa Monica Boulevard in Beverly Hills. Periodically, the collector also strongly hinted that he might locate the project in Santa Monica, between the Santa Monica Courthouse and Civic Auditorium.

The likely selection of a downtown location, which *AN* revealed in March, became even clearer in mid-August after the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the lease of the 2.5-acre site—which was to

be part of the now-stalled Grand Avenue Project—to Broad for \$7.7 million over the course of a 99-year-lease. Broad will also set up a \$200 million endowment to run the museum. Calls to the Broad Foundation have thus far not been returned. The foundation says it won't release renderings of the project until groundbreaking later this fall, essentially sidestepping public review.

While the multi-billion dollar Grand Avenue Project remains in limbo, Grand Avenue itself has become something of an architectural spectacle, with works by Coop Himmelb(l)au, Gehry, Arata Isozaki, Rafael Moneo, and others.

SL

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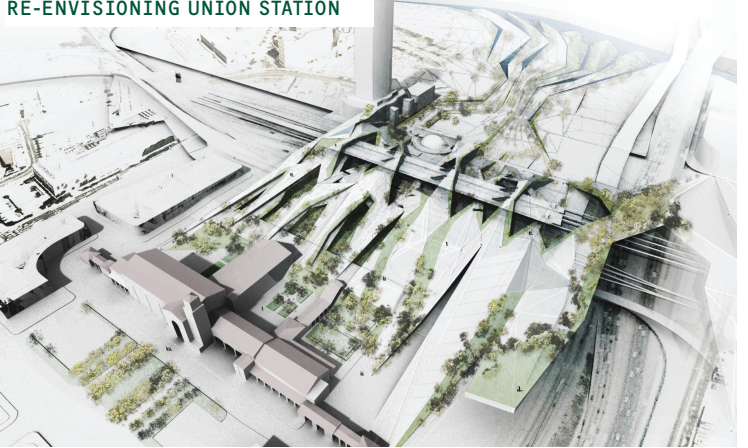
ARCHITECTURAL PAINTS

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 29, 2010

UNION STATION BICYCLE TRANSIT STATION



RE-ENVISIONING UNION STATION



RAILLA WINNERS EXPLORE HIGH-SPEED RAIL OPTIONS

STEP ON IT

This summer, RailLA—a collaboration between the LA Chapter of the AIA and the American Planning Association—sponsored a call for entries seeking fresh ideas for local and national high-speed rail systems. Almost 100 entries came

in from around the world, from famous firms to unknowns. The five top schemes, as selected by RailLA's board, included:

Re-Envisioning Los Angeles by Mark Chan, a proposed transformation of Los Angeles' Union Station

that would connect the existing station with the Los Angeles River, greening the area and stimulating new development downtown. The scheme's proposed structural skeleton would contain concealed water inlets and outlets, distributing recycled gray water to vegetate the structure.

The New Union Station by students from the Industrial Design department at California State University Long Beach made Union Station a destination all its own.

Ample seating, places to relax, and outdoor facilities combined with high-tech, comfortable new trains would radically upgrade if not revolutionize high-speed rail.

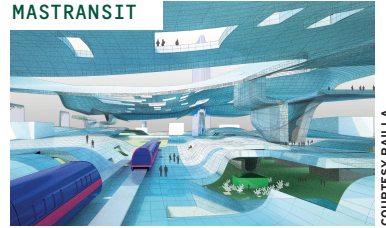
Daily Life with and without trains by Sierra Morris, Isabel McCarthy, Zayda Lopez, and Clara Glassman was perhaps the simplest proposal: a video that illustrates the frantic experience of driving cars as opposed to the laid-back, relaxed lifestyle of train travel.

Another victorious entry looked outside of LA. *Union Station Bicycle Transit Station* by KGP Design Studio is a sleek, glowing peripheral extension to Union Station in Washington, D.C., offering protected bike storage, lockers, and changing space for bike-to-rail commuters.

Finally, *masTransit* by Joshua

G. Stein, Aaron Whelton, Jaclyn Thomforde, and Jacob M. Brostoff promoted dense, organic development, making travel actually less necessary at any speed. A loop around the city on raised infrastructure would link up to local and inter-regional commuting and the California High Speed Rail network. Incidentally, *masTransit* was also a winner of *AN* and *SCI-Arc's New Infrastructure* competition, held last summer. **SL**

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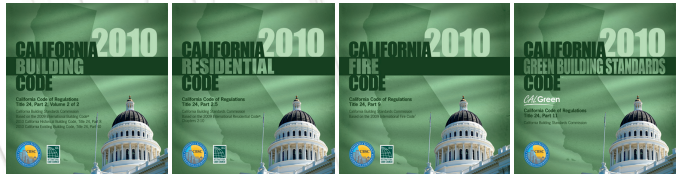
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The new school echoes the Ambassador Hotel's massing and scale.



Thanks to years of controversy and a price tag rising into the hundreds of millions of dollars (\$578 million to be exact, which includes giant legal bills to assuage opponents), most Angelenos know that on September 13, a sprawling educational campus finally opened on the former site of the Ambassador Hotel. The name of the mega-complex is the Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools; it includes six pilot schools on the 544,000-square-foot site.

The Ambassador, of course, was one of the great LA icons. Designed by Myron Hunt and opened in 1921, its hybrid art deco-cum-Mediterranean aesthetic—together with its tropical-themed Cocoanut Grove Night Club—attracted the likes of the Rat Pack, Nat King Cole, the Oscars, and several U.S. presi-

dents. But the hotel fell into disrepair, and was razed in 2006 by its new owner, the LA Unified School District. There were years of debate as to whether the building was salvageable or could be transformed for another use; but at some point, there was no going back.

The new school complex is a compromise in many ways. Conflicting forces wanted different things: Many wanted an exact replica of the old Ambassador. Others, including the architects, Pasadena-based Gonzalez Goodale, wanted a contemporary building. The result falls somewhere in the middle. It takes on the scale, massing, and siting of the old hotel, as well as some former details, like its sloped roof and giant lawn, with a contemporary palette in between.

A recent tour of the building began at the expansive lawns leading up to the school, which is raised and set back from the street almost exactly where the old hotel stood. Grassy swaths provide a welcome respite from the noise of Wilshire Boulevard in LA's Koreatown. A linear memorial park to Robert F. Kennedy, who was killed in a kitchen corridor (no longer extant) of the Ambassador, is temporarily closed off from Wilshire and the public by an ugly chain link fence. With an attractive mix of contributions by local artists, the park could be the welcome mat to this lawn.

The northernmost structure features a gridded glass facade that exposes the classrooms inside. Flanking this six-story building are vertical, perforated screens over the outdoor stairs, featuring green, white, gray, black, and other colored squares. In front sits an exact exterior replica of the white, boxy Cocoanut Grove. The buildings to the south are long, linear bars clad in metallic panels that lead the eye to the southernmost building, a colorful composition that meets the street at storefront scale.

From a planning perspective, the school manages the chaos of this impossibly complex program with intelligence. The lawn softens the thousands of pounds

of concrete, the thoroughfare in the center is an effective connector, the site's varying grades break down the overall scale, and the long view corridors provide much-needed orientation. Also, the outdoor eating and play areas take advantage, to an extent, of the California climate. It remains to be seen how so many schools will interact without conflict, but it seems at first inspection like it will work.

Hamstrung by district regulations, the school interiors are institutional. There is plenty of natural light, especially in generously wide hallways, and flowing in through floor-to-ceiling windows in many classrooms. Interior highlights include the reconstituted Middle Eastern motif of the Cocoanut Grove—hokey, but fun—as an assembly space; the old Paul Williams coffee shop as a fabulous, over-the-top teachers' lounge; and the gently vaulted library inside the old ballroom, now, with its lovely murals and hypnotic volume, one of the most gracious spaces in the whole project.

Overall, the architecture is a strange, even campy hybrid of futurism and historicism. The pitched roofs are an approximated Mediterranean element tacked onto a contemporary shell. Repeating zinc-clad lintels and

colorful vertical fins feel more sci-fi than historic. The aluminum stair grid, while an effective tool for promoting outdoor circulation, seems jarringly out of context. The glass facade feels heavy and inelegant, more suitable to an office building.

Respecting the past translates here into something closer to loosely mimicking it. Effective historical architecture involves painstaking investigation and attention to detail. Effective contemporary architecture is rooted in solving the problems of site and in offering a fresh vision. This complex has neither, and for a staggering price. The students, and the city of LA, should be getting something better. **SL**



MAGNUS STARK

Walter de Maria's white bars.



SAM LUBELL

TRANSFORMATION REDUX continued from front page to the contemplation of the work of art." Those attributes define the Menil in Houston, the Nasher in Dallas, and the Modern Wing of the Chicago Art Institute, but they eluded him in BCAM. A Walter de Maria installation comprising rows of white bars filled the 45,000-square-foot expanse of the Resnick for a month before it was subdivided

for three opening exhibitions.

The Resnick rounds out a masterplan that substitutes clarity for incoherence. In 2001, Eli Broad invited Piano to enter an architectural competition to transform LACMA's messy jumble of buildings and add new galleries. He declined, explaining, "it's very frustrating to play a good piece by a string quartet in the middle of three badly played rock concerts." The competition was held; Rem Koolhaas' audacious proposal to demolish most of the existing buildings and put new galleries under a translucent tent was accepted and then quickly abandoned as infeasible. Piano was lured back to design BCAM, and

he agreed on the condition that he could transform the campus.

After four decades of mediocre architecture, confused leadership, and anemic philanthropy (but for a handful of individuals and foundations), LACMA began to exploit the potential of its collections and exhibition program. Ogden Street was closed, a piazza replaced a parking structure, and the museum entrance was relocated to an open-sided pavilion designed by Piano. A covered walkway, also formed by Piano, links it with LACMA West, the former May Company department store that will be remodeled by SPF:a when funding becomes available. That axis extends east through

the atrium of the Ahmanson, up a grand staircase to the old courtyard, and onto the Japanese Pavilion. Piano now has his quartet of new structures, and has realized his goal of "carving through the site with the precision of a surgeon [and creating] a carefully measured sequence of architectural spaces, a procession through the museum's collection and the city's cultural memory."

It's a remarkable achievement, and now that Broad has turned his attention to creating his own museum downtown, director Michael Govan is providing the vision and the drive. He insisted that art should have primacy, enlivening blank facades with artist-designed banners and substi-

tuting Chris Burden's *Urban Light* (a cluster of restored street lamps) for a bombastic arch as LACMA's public face. Robert Irwin, who helped Govan transform a Nabisco factory into Dia:Beacon, is creating a living museum of palm trees—30 species from six continents—to complement the buildings. A levitating boulder from Michael Heizer may soon be installed on the plaza, and equally ambitious installations by Jeff Koons and James Turrell are promised. Pritzker-prizewinner Peter Zumthor is helping Govan reconceive the older buildings. LACMA has been radically transformed, and the momentum should carry it to new heights of excellence. **MICHAEL WEBB**

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ARCHITECTURAL GLASS

METAL COATINGS

ARCHITECTURAL PAINTS

Steel Line



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PMCA, PATRICK TIGHE ARCHITECTURE

JOHN CHASE, 1953-2010 continued from front page call from John. (How did he track me down?) He introduced himself and told me he wanted to show me what they were doing at Disney Imagineering, where he was then a designer. I'm sorry, I told him politely but firmly, but *The Architectural Review* does not cover Disney (the company was loathed by Peter Davey, then editor of the *AR*).

John did not take "no" for an answer and kept on calling, until almost the end of my trip when he finally gave up on the Imagineering pitch but offered instead to take me on a tour of LA. Barely had I set eyes on the dandified, twinkly-eyed John when I realized what an idiot I'd been not to meet him sooner. He took me on a tour that only he could give, of offbeat buildings as well as classics, hidden gardens, and endearing, shabby, roadside architecture, all accompanied by a hilarious and perceptive running narration. These were followed by headache-inducing drinks at the Polynesian-themed Tiki Bar in Silver Lake. I boarded the plane the next day having fallen in love with John Chase and his Los Angeles.

From then on, we were firm friends, at long distance during the four years before I moved here in 1991. When I arrived in LA, however, John was no longer working at Imagineering. He was in a less settled phase, doing a mix of small architectural jobs (mostly residential, usually preservationist, and with great charm) and freelance writing projects.

One of those writing projects was with me. We wrote a guide to Las Vegas architecture at the moment its themed casino mania was peaking (1997). Foolishly, we chose to do our research in the middle of August; a week spent in 110-degree-plus sun was not ideal for anyone, least of all a balding red-head, and our faltering efforts birthed a term John loved to use when we were bungling things together: the "John-and-Frances-Juggernaut."

But when John put pen to paper, every sentence crackled. Of Caesar's Palace, for example, he wrote: "While Caesar's... looks like a women's prison in Tehran from the outside by daylight, inside it is the ultimate

Vegas casino... and is, in the best sense of the word, a camp masterpiece, a knowing parodic send-up of the impossibility of really theming a modern hotel on ancient classical lines. The irony is that spiritually... it probably really is the hotel that a licentious Roman of Imperial vintage would feel right at home in."

John had been writing since college when his thesis was turned into a book, *The Sidewalk Companion to Santa Cruz Architecture*. He was a superb writer, very witty, as well as a completely original and serious thinker. In 1982 he wrote *Exterior Decoration: Hollywood's Inside-Out Houses*, a revelatory examination of modest houses decorated on the outside by their interior decorator and set designer occupants. After that, in 1985, he spent a brief time as architecture critic for *The San Francisco Examiner*.

Another important publication was a book he wrote with Margaret Crawford and John Kaliski called *Everyday Urbanism* (1999; reissued 2008). In this book and in his wonderful book of essays *Glitter Stucco & Dumpster Diving: Reflections on Building Production in the Vernacular City*, John laid out his personal philosophy of architecture and the lived environment. It was a philosophy that would come to flavor his work at the City of West Hollywood.

John started working as Urban Designer for West Hollywood in 1996, and while at times he complained about the constraints of bureaucracy, this position fitted him perfectly. There he was able to apply all his passions: his fascination with the entire urban fabric; his concern with preservation, as well as his embrace of really interesting new architecture; and his preoccupation, unique among architecture critics, with "building production." He defined this in *Glitter Stucco* as "the sum total of the built response to human needs"—by which he meant the dominant built environment of "developer housing, blank-faced speculative office buildings, shopping malls, parking structures, and warehouses" that were generally ignored or demeaned by the high-art architecture world.

In West Hollywood, he had a hand in shaping the streetscape, notably Santa Monica Boulevard (which he declared would be his legacy), its signage, parks, and buildings. He urged developers to aim for high quality; among John's favorite new WeHo buildings were the Formosa 1140 condo building designed by Lorcan O'Herlihy, and the Sierra Bonita apartments for low-income people with special needs, designed by Patrick Tighe.

When I last spoke to John, he was full of excitement about the next stage of his life. He had announced his retirement from WeHo and was anticipating a return to writing and consulting, in the company of the man who brought incredible joy and stability to John's life, Jonathan Cowan. (We jointly celebrated our respective marriages in a foursome wedding reception three years ago; and John was my daughter Summer's godfather. The addition of Jonathan meant she got to enjoy two highly indulgent "godfathers.") It is a mean trick of fate that he was taken away in his prime; I just hope that wherever he is he knows how much he contributed to LA and its understanding of itself, as well as to me and so many others personally as the most entertaining, supportive, and beloved friend.

FRANCES ANDERTON IS THE HOST OF DNA: DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE, BROADCAST ON KCRW IN LOS ANGELES.

SANTA MONICA MALL RECAST AS OPEN AIR DESTINATION



OFF THE TOP

Thirty years ago, a barely famous architect named Frank Gehry, working with Gruen Associates, designed a three-story indoor mall near the beach in Santa Monica. It was a far cry from the sumptuous buildings he creates today, but the use of metal, glass, and expressive forms was still there, in its infancy.

Little of the original Santa Monica Place now remains, reconfigured into an outdoor luxury shopping center by Los Angeles-based Jerde Partnership and Dallas-based Omniplan. Save for some chain link signage, it is an entirely different place, less jazzy and more natural, less claustrophobic and more connected; a classy joint—at least by mall standards—that the developer hopes will attract the crowds that never flocked here before.

"It struggled as an indoor mall," John Hampton, an Omniplan associate principal, said of the Gehry mall. "We had to make more outdoor space." To do that, the architects ripped off the roof, gutted the interior, rebuilt the common areas, and opened multiple entrances to the street.

Developer Macerich Co., which bought the mall in 1999, first planned a ten-acre mixed-use complex of condominium towers, offices, and shopping, but neighborhood opposition scuttled that proposal. In 2007, the plan morphed into a \$265 million, 750,000-square-foot shopping center that essentially preserves the footprint of the older mall while adding public walkways, an indoor/outdoor dining deck with views of the

ocean, and a ground-floor plaza for events.

Converting an indoor mall into an outdoor one presented unique challenges. The structure had to be rebuilt with more durable materials, including lithocrete floors, terracotta cladding, and swooping glass escalator canopies. A 9,000-square-foot dining deck sits atop the new roof.

Perhaps the most dramatic change is that there are no longer any gates, doors, or fences separating the shops from the street. Instead, there are four pedestrian access points connecting to the surrounding neighborhood and to local street life. According to the architects, each entrance references its adjacent neighborhood. For instance, the 2nd Street entry, closest to the beach, features a wide, curving eave reminiscent of a wave's crest.

The architects have also incorporated sustainable elements. In addition to the reduced need for air conditioning and heating as a result of its outdoor conversion, the landscaping consists of drought-resistant plants and a green roof above the concierge stand. There is also solar roofing, sustainably sourced wood, and various products using recycled materials. The developer is aiming for LEED Silver certification.

Another significant shift is the tenant mix, abandoning many of the mid-priced stores for more high-end tenants. The third leg in the mall's tenant mix is a focus on food, with sit-down restaurants and an outdoor wine bar, an upscale food court, and an upcoming gourmet market place inspired by San Francisco's Ferry Building.

Rising in the midst of the ovoid plaza is the 60-foot-tall *Sliver* sculpture by Christian Moeller, part of Santa Monica's Percent for Art program, showing constantly changing "slivers" of news media such as CNN. Other pieces include Ball Nogues Studio's *Cradle*, 335 mirror-polished stainless steel spheres suspended from the wall of the Pugh + Scarpa-designed parking structure. Anne Marie Karlsen's *Wheels* sits on an opposite parking structure, a tile mural inspired by the old Ferris wheel on the Santa Monica Pier. **MARISSA GLUCK**



COURTESY OMNIPLAN

The Grandmarc (above) and Strathmore Apartments (below).



ABOVE: PPC LANDVENTURES; BELOW: MICHAEL WEBB



LAST STAND continued from front page Westwood Community Plan, the project was approved by the LA City Planning Commission on August 12. The vote upheld the commission's ruling, rejecting an appeal by opponents who call themselves the Friends of Richard Neutra's Strathmore Apartments.

"It was a deeply disappointing decision," said Steven Sann, chair of the Westwood Community Council, and an outspoken opponent of the project. "For architects, this is a very dangerous precedent. It basically nullifies the power of the Design Review Board." Such review boards generally do not have final say on development decisions, but their recommendations are often heeded. Sann further argued that the project had been altered after the final DRB rejection, a breach of procedure precipitated by private negotiations between the developer

and the city.

Dale Goldsmith, a lawyer for PPC Landventures, considers the case closed. "The planning director determined it was fully compliant," he said. "This is not about changing the rules." Thanks largely to input from the DRB, the developer did make some concessions, removing a floor of the project, stepping the building in places, adding more landscape and open space, and breaking it down into two pieces instead of a continuous street wall. Supporters at the meeting praised the project's LEED aspirations and its ability to fill student housing and affordable housing needs.

But Sann called the changes "woefully inadequate." He and other opponents insist the building is still far too large for the neighborhood, that it will box in, overwhelm, and cast shadows on the Strathmore Apartments, and that its wall-like frontages will discourage pedestrian

connection. Opponents, who also include architects like Richard Meier, Hitoshi Abe, and Craig Hodgetts, also asserted that the building was an example of "mediocre" design and would cause traffic and parking problems, and that the large amount of students in the building would tip the delicate balance of occupants in the area.

"They pulled a bait and switch," said Michael Webb, an occupant of the Strathmore Apartments (and regular contributor to *The Architect's Newspaper*). "It looks slightly different but it still has the same amount of units and it still destroys the scale of the neighborhood." The planning commission ruled that the building's bulk is allowable under SB1818, which permits increased density when coupled with affordable housing units. There will be only three units of affordable housing at the Grandmarc.

"Student housing isn't the issue; the development isn't compatible with local plans," said Stephen Resnick, president of the Westwood Homeowners Association. "It's just a monster project." It remains undecided if opponents will be pursuing further legal action to try to derail the project. **SL**



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ARCHITECTURAL GLASS

METAL COATINGS

ARCHITECTURAL PAINTS



Anthony Coscia designed his Skywave House in Venice as a place to live, work, and explore ideas. A curved sheet of steel provides shade and protection, and walls of glass open up to dense plantings on the 40-by-120-foot lot. Step inside, and you can take in the 90-foot-long interior at a glance, with its open stairs leading to floating platforms, glass-walled rooms, and sliding doors. There's a palpable sense of openness, and the abundant natural light, reflections, and green vistas obliterate the divide between inside and out.

Coscia Day Architecture + Design have spent two decades designing inventive houses, smart commercial spaces, and restaurants like Natalee Thai, Azia, and Xi'an in Venice and Beverly Hills. In each of these projects, the architects started with a simple model before using computer software to model a sculptural enclosure that wraps around its occupants as fluidly

as a robe embracing a body. Indeed, one inspiration for the Skywave House was an exhibition of Issey Miyake's A-POC garments made from a single, laser-cut piece of cloth. The immediate point of departure was a small model of a desk the architects were working on: a floating wing atop a glass shape.

Following these investigations of surface and space, Coscia folded a single sheet of paper, like origami, but with a more fluid form. "That first model had more creases in it than the final design," he recalled. The soft curvilinear forms came after living on the site, a short walk from the rounded waves of the ocean, and from both the smoothly curved furniture of the past decade and the bent plywood work of Eames, he added.

The steel is cut away to pull light into the center of the house and to vent hot air in summer. Living this close to the ocean, there is no need for air condition-

ing, and the house is designed to achieve a high level of sustainability. The standing-seam roof and upper wall cladding are painted white to diffuse the sun, while scoop skylights and motorized windows on the west side draw in ocean breezes. Concrete floors absorb the winter sun and incorporate radiant heating that can be powered from solar panels. The kitchen-dining space floats over a raised thermal base filled with the excavated dirt of the concrete grade beams, and this cools the house in summer.

Though the house is set back from the boundary line on all four sides, it seems to fill the site, and that gives it a visceral immediacy. Step through the gate and it fills your field of vision, swelling and stretching like a living creature. Canted, tilted, and curved planes impart a sense of movement. The interior is treated like a transparent loft, with a monochromatic

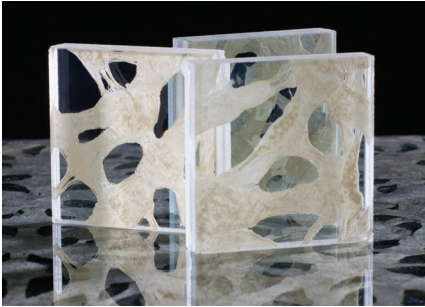


palette and spare organic furnishings. Each space flows into the next, carrying one through the multi-level interior from the terrace and living room at the front, and a glass-walled office below, to the lofty central area for eating and entertaining and on to the upper-level master suite in back. "The house has changed us and the way we live," said Coscia. "Though I've

Clockwise from top left: An open central space is inset with shifting and intersecting planes; steel roof forms seem to float above glass walls; the exposed house is protected by a tight Venice lot; the top floor overlooks the living room.

known it from the moment of conception, I'm constantly making fresh discoveries." **MW**

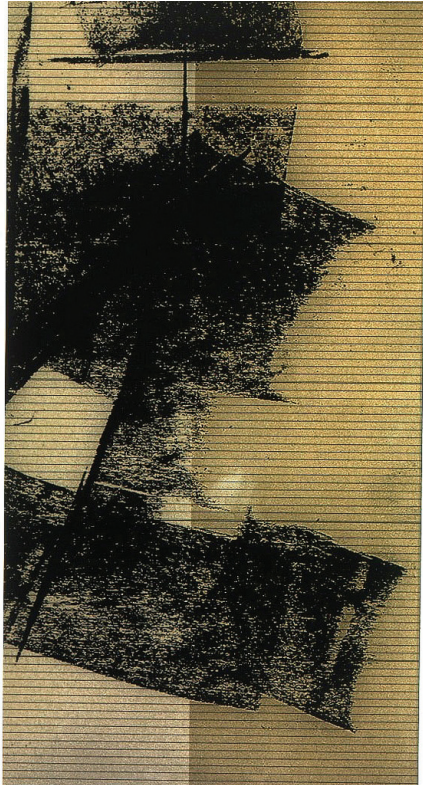




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2



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5



6

NEW GLASS TECHNOLOGY BRINGS CLARITY TO THE MARKET
BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ

LITE TOUCH

1 IVORY SPIDERWEB WITH BARKSKIN LIVINGGLASS

Livingglass has partnered with hand-pounded bark manufacturer Caba Company to create a new line of decorative glass with a Barkskin interlayer made of the bark of fallen trees. The impact-resistant laminated safety glass panels contain 100 percent recycled glass and resin and are UV, water, and chemical resistant with a Class A, Class 1 fire rating. Panels can be as thin as ½ inch and are available in custom lengths up to 144 inches or custom widths up to 36 inches. www.livingglass.com

2 PYRAN PLATINUM SCHOTT

Schott's Pyran Platinum glazing is a transparent glass-ceramic material made without wires or the hazardous heavy metals antimony, arsenic, or barium, which are present in other fire-rated glass-ceramics. At just 3/16 inch thick, it is appropriate for non-impact, safety-rated locations including transoms and windows, while meeting fire-rating requirements, including a hose stream test, for up to 90 minutes. Finished with a nearly invisible microstructure, the glass is produced with a patented process that improves color clarity and eliminates distortion. www.us.schott.com

3 PRINT JOEL BERMAN GLASS STUDIOS

Winner of a silver Best of NeoCon architectural products award this year, the Print technique developed by Joel Berman's graphics division allows high-resolution photographs and designs to be printed directly on glass using ceramic frit ink. Images are printed with a minimum resolution of 300 dpi on standard, low-iron, or Berman textured glass up to 59 by 126 inches. Translucent and opaque finishes are available, and glass can be tempered or laminated for a full range of interior applications. www.jbermanglass.com

4 KRYSTAL KLEAR GLASS AGC GLASS COMPANY

Krystal Klear is a new family of low-e glass from AGC that has the strength of heavy glass but without the greenish tint visible in some high-iron content panels. Though it can be used as a solar glass, Krystal Klear offers 91 percent light transmission, making it an ideal choice for interior applications. Laminating is available when more strength is needed, and the glass can also be tempered, curved, silkscreened, or insulated. www.afgglass.com

5 RENOVATE JE BERKOWITZ

Architectural glass fabricator JE Berkowitz's new Renovate division offers a system that allows single-pane windows to be retrofitted with an interior double-glazed attachment. The system includes iDea Seal weather seals, custom beauty caps, and setting blocks from Lauren Manufacturing and Plastics, as well as a customized Super Spacer TriSeal from Edgetech, which provides a seal between window units. Tests conducted by the company indicate that up to 65 percent energy savings and 7 to 31 LEED points are possible with the system. www.jeberkowitz.com

6 SPHERE NATHAN ALLAN

Part of Nathan Allan's Josiah J collection, Sphere is a line of glass shapes that can be affixed to one or both sides of clear and textured cast sheets of glass. The company's artists work with architects and designers to develop the size and layout of the spheres before fabrication begins. Eight colors, seven shapes, and three standard diameters up to 3 inches are available, but the company will also fabricate custom spheres up to 24 inches. www.nathanallan.com

Many architects have taken ultra-transparent glazing to diaphanous levels of refinement, but some are looking in the other direction, probing new dimensions of performance and opacity. Here are three technologically audacious applications from around the world—whether slumped, corrugated or acid-etched—that show glass in a different light.



THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

VAKKO
HEADQUARTERS
ISTANBUL,
TURKEY
REX



When asked to design the new headquarters for Vakko, a Turkish fashion and media company, the architects at REX were presented with an old, partially constructed concrete shell and an aggressive timeline to complete the project. Rather than concealing the building shell—derelict structures like this are common in Turkey, where concrete construction is fast and inexpensive—the architects grew interested in revealing it through the thinnest sheets of glass possible. “We didn’t want to hide the adaptive reuse,” said REX principal Joshua Prince-Ramus. “This kind of adaptive reuse, of an abandoned, incomplete structure, is really at the forefront of sustainability.”

The architects turned to the technique known as slumped glass, by which glass is repeatedly heated

and cooled until it falls into a mold and assumes the mold’s form. Slumping is typically used to create decorative effects, but REX decided to use it for structural purposes: The glass panels feature an X-shaped impression that gives them vertical and lateral stiffness and strength. At 5 by 10 feet, the 134 panels that wrap the building are a wafer-like 3/16 of an inch thick. They are held in place by four simple pins at the corners.

Before the glass could be heated, however, molds had to be made. Wood composite forms were cut from jigs, and then ceramic molds were made from the impression of the wooden forms. The glass was then heated and cooled over the ceramic molds, using the same techniques used to heat-strengthen glass. The process would have been



IWAN BAAH

MUSEUM
AAN DE STROOM
ANTWERP,
BELGIUM
NEUTELINGS RIEDIJK

SARAH BLEE/COURTESY NEUTELINGS RIEDIJK

prohibitively expensive in many other places. “Turkey is at that sweet spot in their development where they have all the technology, but labor costs are low and they retain a large and highly skilled class of craftsmen,” Prince-Ramus said.

The effect, according to the architects, is something akin to Saran Wrap, with the glass appearing to pucker as if pulled taut. Startlingly clear when viewed straight on, the panes catch light and reflections when viewed from an angle. The facade is distinctive without resorting to heavy-handed branding or the overt decoration common in many prominent buildings for fashion companies. “Our client didn’t want a logo on the building,” Prince-Ramus said. “But they wanted something memorable.”

ALAN G. BRAKE

Facing page, top: Wafer-thin slumped glass reveals the building’s frame.

Below, left: The X-shaped impressions strengthen the panels and reflect light.

Above: The Museum aan de Stroom’s 10-story tower is covered in red Indian sandstone, broken up by full-length windows of corrugated glass.

Right: The corrugation creates a tinted effect when viewed at an angle from the museum’s interior.



BART VAN DAMME

Ascending the escalators that spiral up Antwerp’s newly-completed Museum aan de Stroom, galleries displaying artifacts of the city’s past alternate with 18-foot-high views out to the city and waterfront. A competition-winning design by Dutch architecture firm Neutelings Riedijk, it comprises ten floors cantilevered from a central core, each one rotated 90 degrees from the one below. Because many of the exhibitions’ contents will be sensitive to the sun, the galleries themselves have no windows, providing a stark contrast to the expansive panoramas on every other floor.

Those views are especially striking through the museum’s undulating glass enclosures. After winning the commission ten years ago, Neutelings Riedijk teamed up with glass engineer Rob Nijse to devise a way of making their oversize panes thin enough to maintain clarity but without resorting to metal supports. Their solution was to corrugate the panes, placing float glass in a wavy mold and baking it until it melted into shape.

Although the basic technique for curving glass dates to the 19th century, the unprecedented size of these panes raised a host of new problems. Only one other building had incorporated similar corrugated windows, to Neutelings’ knowledge: the 2005 Casa da Musica in Porto, by Rem Koolhaas, who worked with Nijse as well. But the 18-foot panes in the Museum aan de Stroom were far larger, too large for most ovens to accommodate.

The team solved that problem by renting Europe’s largest oven, a 20-footer in Italy, but other difficulties remained. The hardest, according to principal partner Willem van Neutelings, was how to achieve enough precision in the dimensions of the panes to allow them to align perfectly and connect with silicone joints. “It took a lot of calculations and work with the glass industry to make it suitable,” Neutelings said.

The thin panes, unmarred by any metal reinforcement, seem to disappear when the museum is glimpsed from far away. When viewed from within the building, the corrugation is obvious. Standing inside the radius of one of the curves appears to create a private viewing chamber, with a much wider panorama than that of a flat window. Alternately, seen from a slant, the glass takes on a greenish tint, turning the window into more of a curtain and making the room feel enclosed. “What you see in the glass depends on your position,” Neutelings said.

JULIA GALEF



LIGHTCATCHER
AT WHATCOM
MUSEUM
BELLINGHAM,
WASHINGTON
OLSON KUNDIG
ARCHITECTS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BENJAMIN BENSCHNEIDER, EXCEPT BELOW RIGHT: TIM BIES

The Pacific Northwest is known for many things, among them salmon, pine trees, and grunge rock. Sunshine does not often make the list. When designing an expansion of the Whatcom Museum, a showcase of regional art in Bellingham, Washington, Seattle-based Olson Kundig Architects knew that to attract a crowd, a luminescent structure would be essential.

The new, 42,000-square-foot museum is known as the Lightcatcher, for the 180-foot-long, 37-foot-high swooping wall of glass that is the project's signature, a shining concavity that lures visitors into a nexus of art and activity. "It really came from the idea of light and a lack thereof—that this would be a focal point to gather light and gather people," said Olivier Landa, the project manager at Olson Kundig.

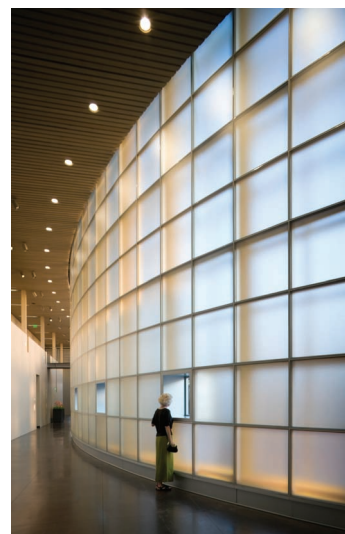
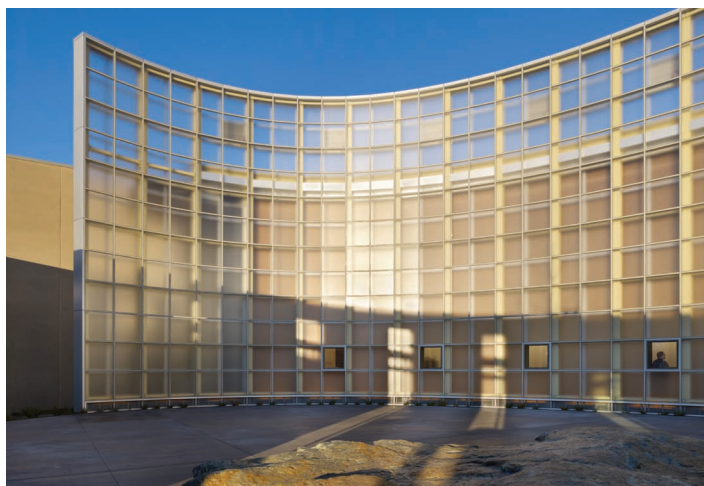
On typically overcast days, the glass wall takes on a silver hue, reflecting the clouds; during the summer, it radiates warmth, shining like a peak of the Northern Cascades. As with most of Olson Kundig's work, the project draws heavily on its surroundings.

To achieve this effect, Olson Kundig employed a complex system of frits and laminates on the two walls of glass that comprise the Lightcatcher. They began with

an acid-etched product made by Montreal-based Walker Glass with a translucency that shifts from a nearly transparent ghostliness to an opaque veil. "It's almost like it's alive," principal Jim Olson said, adding that it took a year of mock-ups to create the desired appearance. The etching serves a dual purpose, protecting art from direct light as well as transforming the wall into a canvas, allowing for art installations and films.

Where the glass meets the museum, an agate-tinged frit is employed, which gets progressively denser as visitors travel toward the galleries, allowing their eyes to adjust and shielding the art within. The frit helps the museum glow, both by day and night, when interior lights telegraph activity inside. To create even more of a beacon, white, golden, and salmon-colored lights have been installed within the wall.

The most unique thing about the Lightcatcher, though, is not the way it looks but the way it works, as an integral part of the museum's HVAC system. The two sets of window panes create a 2-foot chimney that traps heat, insulating the building in winter and cooling it in summer, when vents at the top and portholes at the base are opened. **MATT CHABAN**



Top and above, left: When not reflecting the sun's rays, the Lightcatcher uses gels to create an inviting atmosphere in the courtyard at night.
Above: A visitor peers through one of the porthole windows that doubles as a ventilation hatch.
Left: The exterior glass is acid-etched to reflect a diffuse light.

SEPTEMBER

WEDNESDAY 29

LECTURE

David Benjamin

Proof

7:00 p.m.

SCI-Arc

W. M. Keck Lecture Hall

960 East 3rd St.

Los Angeles

www.sciarc.edu

FILM

Flow

(Irena Salina, 2008), 84 min.

6:00 p.m.

San Francisco Main Library

100 Larkin St.

San Francisco

www.aiasf.org

THURSDAY 30

LECTURES

Kurt W. Forster

UCSD by Design

7:00 p.m.

Museum of Contemporary

Art San Diego

700 Prospect St.

La Jolla

www.mcasd.org

Edwin McCann

Ideas on Trial

6:30 p.m.

Museum of Contemporary

Art, Los Angeles

250 South Grand Ave.

Los Angeles

www.moca.org

Will Fleissig,

Andy Thornley, et al.

A 21st Century

Transportation System

12:30 p.m.

SPUR

654 Mission St.

San Francisco

www.spur.org

EVENT

Get on Board!

Reception for the

Downtown L.A.

Streetcar

5:30 p.m.

Target Terrace @ L.A. LIVE

800 West Olympic Blvd.

Los Angeles

www.aialosangeles.org

OCTOBER

FRIDAY 1

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Karen Hsiao:

Between the Surfaces

Matt Wood: Mom's in Jail

Christine Wu:

Romancing the Looky Loos

La Luz De Jesus Gallery

4633 Hollywood Blvd.

Los Angeles

www.laluzdejesus.com

SATURDAY 2

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Brian M. Viveros

The Dirtyland

Thinkspace Art Gallery

6009 Washington Blvd.

Culver City

www.thinkspacegallery.com

Takako Yamaguchi

Nude, Akt, Nu

Cardwell Jimmerson

Contemporary Art

8568 Washington Blvd.

Culver City

www.cardwelljimmerson.com

Kim Abeles,

Jonah Brucker-Cohen, et al.

Make:Craft

Otis College of

Art and Design

9045 Lincoln Blvd.

Los Angeles

www.otis.edu/

benmaltzgallery

Olmec: Colossal Masterworks

of Ancient Mexico

Eye for the Sensual:

Selections from the

Resnick Collection

Fashioning Fashion:

European Dress in Detail,

1700–1915

Los Angeles County Museum

of Art

5905 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles

www.lacma.org

EVENT

Beer Art and Music Festival

1:00 p.m.

18th Street Arts Center

1639 18th St., Santa Monica

18thstreet.org

TUESDAY 5

LECTURES

Edmund de Waal

A Hidden Inheritance:

Objects, Memories, and

Collections

7:00 p.m.

The J. Paul Getty Center

1200 Getty Center Dr.

Los Angeles

www.getty.edu

Gervais Tompkin and Laura

Crescimano

The Future of the Workplace

12:30 p.m.

SPUR

654 Mission St.

San Francisco

www.spur.org

FILM

City Symphonies

12:00 p.m.

San Francisco Museum of

Modern Art

151 3rd St., San Francisco

www.sfmoma.org

WEDNESDAY 6

LECTURE

Bernard Tschumi

7:00 p.m.

SCI-Arc

W. M. Keck Lecture Hall

960 East 3rd St.

Los Angeles

www.sciarc.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Radical Light:

Alternative Film and Video in

the San Francisco Bay Area,

1945–2000

Berkeley Art Museum and

Pacific Film Archive

2625 Durant Ave., Berkeley

www.bampfa.berkeley.edu

John Belingheri

Andrea Schwartz Gallery

525 2nd St., San Francisco

www.asgallery.com

THURSDAY 7

EXHIBITION OPENING

Re:Cycle: Bike Culture in

Southern California

University of California,

Riverside

Sweeney Art Gallery

3834 Main St., Riverside

sweeney.ucr.edu

EVENT

Pickpocket Almanack

7:00 p.m.

San Francisco Museum of

Modern Art

151 3rd St., San Francisco

www.pickpocketalmanack.org

FRIDAY 8

LECTURE

Cole Roberts

Workplace of the

Future and Slim Cities

12:30 p.m.

UC Berkeley College of

Environmental Design

112 Wurster Hall, Berkeley

www.ced.berkeley.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING

Molten Color:

Glassmaking in Antiquity

J. Paul Getty Villa

17985 Pacific Coast Hwy.

Pacific Palisades

www.getty.edu

SATURDAY 9

EXHIBITION OPENING

Collection Applied Design:

A Kim MacConnel

Retrospective

Museum of Contemporary

Art San Diego

700 Prospect St., La Jolla

www.mcasd.org

SUNDAY 10

EVENT

MAK Architecture Tour

11:00 a.m.

835 North Kings Rd.

West Hollywood

www.makcenter.org

WEDNESDAY 13

LECTURES

Geoff Manaugh

Quadraturin and

Other Architectural

Expansionary Tales

7:00 p.m.

SCI-Arc

960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles

www.sciarc.edu

John Kriken

City Design for

Positive Change

7:00 p.m.

UC Berkeley College of

Environmental Design

112 Wurster Hall, Berkeley

www.ced.berkeley.edu

THURSDAY 14

LECTURE

Walead Beshty

7:00 p.m.

Hammer Museum

10899 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles

hammer.ucla.edu

SATURDAY 16

LECTURE

Victoria Kastner

William Randolph Hearst

and J. Paul Getty:

Collectors of Antiquities

2:00 p.m.

J. Paul Getty Villa

17985 Pacific Coast Hwy.

Pacific Palisades

www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Pearl C. Hsiung

Never Ends

Steve Turner Contemporary

6026 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles

www.steveturner

contemporary.com

Tiki Farm:

10 Years of Tiki Mugs

La Luz De Jesus Gallery

4633 Hollywood Blvd.

Los Angeles

www.laluzdejesus.com

SUNDAY 17

EVENTS

Fall Homes Tour: Off Sunset,

Brentwood to Palisades

11:00 a.m.

2101 La Mesa Dr.

Santa Monica

www.aialosangeles.org

Dylan Bolles and Sasha Hom:

Myth of Ten Thousand Things

3:00 p.m.

Southern Exposure

3030 20th St., San Francisco

soex.org

MONDAY 18

LECTURE

Pierluigi Serraino

Rediscover the City: Northern

California Modernism

6:00 p.m.

AIA San Francisco

130 Sutter St., San Francisco

www.aiasf.org

TUESDAY 19

LECTURES

Deanna Petherbridge

The Display of Wit

3:30 p.m.

The J. Paul Getty Center

1200 Getty Center Dr.

Los Angeles

www.getty.edu

Brad Borevitz

Thinkings: How Computers

Change the Way We See by

Altering the Way We Think

7:00 p.m.

Southern Exposure

3030 20th St., San Francisco

soex.org

THURSDAY 21

LECTURE

Bobby McAlpine

Home Within Us

11:00 a.m.

Pacific Design Center

8687 Melrose Ave.

West Hollywood

www.pacificdesigncenter.com

FRIDAY 22

SYMPOSIUM

Back to the Future

10:00 a.m.

Hammer Museum

10899 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles

hammer.ucla.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING

R. H. Quaytman: New Work

San Francisco Museum of

Modern Art

151 3rd St.

San Francisco

ARTIFICIAL KUBRICK

AI: Artificial Intelligence: From Stanley Kubrick to Steven Spielberg
Edited by Jan Harlan and Jane M. Struthers
Thames & Hudson, \$60.00



Chris Baker's concept for Rouge City tollgates.

COURTESY THAMES & HUDSON

As a longtime subscriber to *Cinefex*, the special-effects-must-have-monthly, I waited for the review copy of *Artificial Intelligence* with not-too-artfully hidden anticipation. The book was rumored to contain the ultimate revelations about the making of the Kubrick-inspired, Spielberg-written-and-directed science fiction epic.

It is immediately evident from the ballistic-grade paper, majestic proportions, and Mil-Spec binding that no expense was spared to create a book worthy of the motion

picture, and that the authors and publisher prayed that Kubrick's spirit would favor them with a smile in recognition of their dedication.

AI was born of a short story that caught Kubrick's fancy during the making of *Eyes Wide Shut*. Clearly a parable, and imbued with a then-prescient insight into the apocalyptic nature of a global computer network, *AI* posited a robotic boy yearning to be flesh and blood in a world gradually turning from the organic to biomimicry. The book

reveals, through facsimile, sketches, and oral history, the turmoil surrounding Kubrick's struggle to reconcile his own darker emotional tendencies with what he felt the story deserved. It details with production photographs, interviews, and models the making of the film itself, a more "entertaining" Steven Spielberg at the helm.

Kubrick's penchant for expanding upon the nooks and crannies of existing genres, particularly those involving technology, is well known. After eviscerating

Mission Control's black box in *Dr. Strangelove*, and de-romanticizing space travel in *2001*, the path from HAL to *Artificial Intelligence* was, in a sense, preordained. But what began as a potentially corrosive adventure into the underbelly of computer leg-erdemain vaulted backwards to another time and market venture when the project was handed off to Steven Spielberg. From then on, the vision established by the master of iconic storytelling was inexplicably diluted with equal parts *Back to the Future*

and *E.T.*, creating a brew the filmmakers hoped would be a futuristic Pinocchio story, but which in reality became an all-too-earnest story of nice guys with chips for brains.

Nor was the film propelled by a disciplined visual aesthetic. In fact, comparing the visual concepts advanced by conceptual artist Chris Baker to the obsessively detailed and technologically advanced images created by Doug Trumbull for *2001*, or the concise storyboards drawn by Ken Adam for *Strangelove*, is a bit like comparing ABBA

to U2. Yes, they are drawn with a sure hand, and yes, they faithfully register light and space, but as they ricochet from the maudlin to the soft-core cityscape of a venal emporium, the swooning décolletage of the buildings begins to take on the sagging countenance of an over-the-hill streetwalker. It isn't until Baker drops the architectural/anatomical references and goes for pure fantasy that his illustrator's mojo finally kicks in, transporting us with a gift for atmosphere to environments that Lebbeus Woods might have imagined.

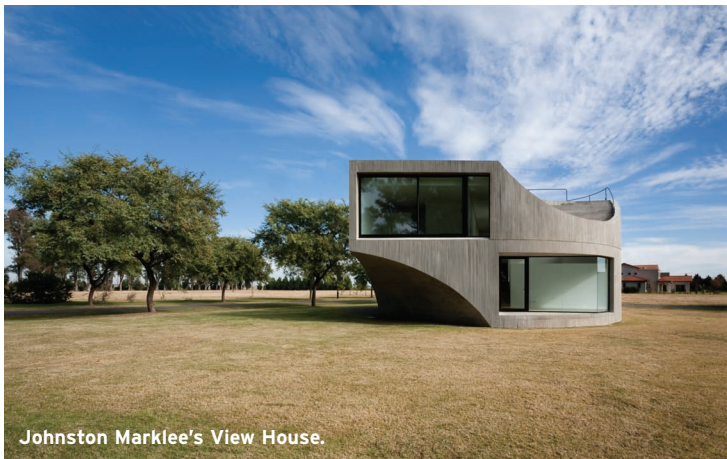
Baker's role, in the parlance of motion picture production, was to provide "visual concepts" that would then serve as the basis for the production designer and a staff of art directors and special effects technicians to realize, using models, full-size environments, and then-nascent "Blue Screen" technology. And it is true that new ground was broken, particularly in the expansion of the virtual studio technologies that had enabled Spielberg's startlingly vivid effects in *Jurassic Park*.

But in the end, the story bats last. Even the famous "Deep Throat" bridges played only a bit part in the picture's final cut, leaving those who hungered for Kubrick's last take wanting more.

CRAIG HODGETTS IS A PRINCIPAL AT HODGETTS + FUNG DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE IN CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA.

WHAT'S GOIN' ON

A5 Los Angeles: Architecture, Interiors, Lifestyle
Edited by Casey C.M. Mathewson. Introduction by Frances Anderton
Oro Editions, \$60.00



Johnston Marklee's View House.

COURTESY ORO EDITIONS

The new book *A5 Los Angeles* is a collector's item—a contemporary architecture "greatest hits" for a city that definitely deserves one. It charts out 22 of the city's most dynamic

firms and vividly displays their most recent projects. And with the help of architectural journalist Frances Anderton, it also conducts a useful exploration of where LA architecture

is, and where it's heading.

The book, put together by German architect Casey Mathewson and LA designer Ann Videriksen, is the first in a planned series about the architecture of world capitals built in the last five years (hence, *A5*). It features beautiful images and layouts, with the work of many of the most dynamic firms in the city, from wHY Architecture in Culver City to Lean Arch downtown. Many in the book are unknown outside of LA, while stalwarts like Gehry Partners, Morphosis, Eric Owen Moss, and Michael Maltzan are left out. It's not entirely clear how the final list came to be, but Mathewson does point to firms "for whom construction matters." And the constructions—from Johnston Marklee's sensuous and light-on-the-landscape View House to Ray Kappe's prefab, LEED-certified, but also uniquely elegant LivingHome—showcase both beauty and brains. The German Mathewson admits in his introduction that his original view of LA designers as architectural and structural lightweights was unfounded.

In her absorbing introduction, Anderton clarifies some of the wonders and paradoxes of LA architecture. Astonished by its "chutzpah and invention," and impressed by its "formal abstraction and material experimentation that thumbs its nose at pallid gestures," she also wonders about its limitations. While most architects here support small houses and multi-family housing to tame the sprawling metropolis, and most believe that the city needs to put more emphasis on public architecture (as Austin Kelly of Xten says, LA is remaking itself "with greater density and urbanism"), the best new work in the city still consists mostly of extra-large, single-family residences.

A roundtable conversation at the back of the book, compiled by Anderton, dissects the contemporary scene particularly well. The architects discuss the evolution of architecture from the days of early modernism to the present. Kelly, who is evidently a shrewd observer of tectonics and history, put it succinctly: "From Neutra, we learned how to separate a glass wall from a structural element, so that they

read independently and slip past one another... From Schindler, we learned about interlocking spaces and the plasticity of surfaces... From Ray and Charles Eames, we learned about a collaborative and open-ended design process." The major evolution from then to now, Kelly added, is architecture that is more complex, more irregular, and more precisely shaped by and tuned to its specific surroundings. Others mention more attention to detail and structure, and a new "warm modernism."

Despite its plusses, two troubling aspects of the book are the dry project descriptions, most of which sound directly cribbed from official firm statements, and the fact that the book was sponsored by a number of local and national companies, many of whose projects fill its pages. It makes me wonder how selections were actually made. But with money for book publishing so scarce, perhaps we're lucky that someone was even able to produce a glamorous, useful record of what talented firms are doing here.

SAM LUBELL IS AN'S WEST COAST EDITOR.

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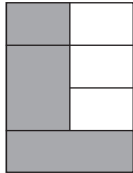
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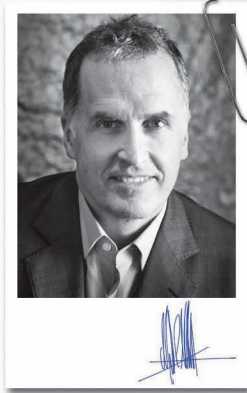
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Mark Sexton, FAIA, Partner, Krueck + Sexton Architects, Chicago, Illinois

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